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UA28/1 The Personnel File

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The Personnel File



Dr. John Vokurka and Phyllis Schnacke spend a lot of their time planning for the future.

Diagnostic Network Coordination Center Special Treatment for Special Children

Before 1973, the parents of children with handicapping conditions didn't have very many options for their children. Up to that time there was no law that gave these special needs children the necessary services to enable them to pursue education to the best of their abilities. Dr. John Vokurka, director of the Diagnostic Network Coordination Center, explained with pride the great strides that have been made.

In accordance with the federal law passed in 1975, the Diagnostic Network Coordination Center was created in 1979 to provide diagnostic and support services to "third level, severely handicapped children." Third level services are for children with handicapping conditions whose needs are so uncommon that assessment at either the local level or in joint agreement with other school districts has proven to be inadequate or impractical.

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Tuition Scholarship Program:

The Benefits of Learning

A benefit initiated in 1966, the tuition scholarship program encourages faculty and staff to enroll in courses at the University that will complement their on-the-job knowledge or enhance their personal lives.

Food Stores Supervisor William Gann has completed two two-year degrees, one in real estate and one in retail middle management, as a WKU employee. Although Gann admits that the process entailed about nine years, he knows that this benefit enabled him to complete degrees that he might not have. Gann, who started working at WKU right after his high school

graduation, said, "There is a good possibility that I would not have taken the courses without some University support."

The full benefit of the program is available only to regular and full-time members of the faculty and staff. For these individuals, the University will pay 100 percent of registration fees for approved courses. In addition, the University will pay 50 percent of the registration fee for the spouses of full-time employees.

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Owen Lawson: A Man for All Campus

Talking with Owen Lawson, it's easy to get the feeling that he knows everything about Western. As the administrator of the Physical Plant, Lawson has known or worked for all the presidents of WKU with the exception of Henry Hardin Cherry. He has known all "the greats" from Diddle to L.T. Smith, from the Wilsons, Gordon and Ivan, to Brigadier General Herb Wassom. He has met, and often talked with, all the politicians, entertainers, and dignitaries that have visited Bowling Green and WKU, including Vice President Bush, President Reagan, Barry Goldwater, Diana Ross and the Supremes, and civil rights activist Ralph Abernathy. He has taught well-known students in his classes like Senator Frank Miller, Joe Iacane, and Senator Kenneth Gibson.

It is important to note that when Lawson drops names he doesn't do it to be pretentious. Lawson has gained a lot of insights by talking with these people. "My associations with these people have been very pleasurable," Lawson said. By the look on his face, it's easy to tell that the feelings he has for WKU and the people that he has worked with are heart felt.

A veteran of World War II, Owen Lawson first came to WKU as a student in 1948. Two years into his college career Korea called. He did not return until 1951 when he met his wife, who was working in the library at the time. Even though he has worked for the University since 1952, Lawson recalls Dr. Kelly Thompson's faith in him when he asked him to head up the planning for what has become the WKU 65-building campus. Thompson said to Lawson, who was a little intimidated by the size of the project, "I don't expect you to know all the answers, but I do expect you to be able to find them."

When Lawson came to the campus there were 13 buildings. The area where his office and the parking structure, Diddle Arena, the student center, and the remainder of the buildings "down the hill" now stand was residential. There were quite a few houses, some fields, 100 employees, and no Physical Plant. He explained that until 1957 the students maintained the campus.



Owen Lawson leaves the University after 34 years of dedicated service.

In the early 60s Lawson began to believe "the future is greater than the past." During this time, Western went through its greatest period of growth to date. Lawson is proud of the planning that he and his colleagues did that enabled them to handle the monumental construction effort necessary to keep up with the jumping enrollment. He said, "In 1961 the enrollment increased 33%. The buildings and beds weren't ready, but somehow we worked it out by the time that the students arrived on campus."

In developing the master plan for the construction of the campus, Lawson and his staff took several things into consideration. One of the things that makes the WKU campus different from most is the karst landscape that it is built on. Lawson explains that because of the sub-surface water system, special attention was paid as to where buildings would be placed so that they wouldn't fall into the underlying caves.

WKU was also one of the first in Kentucky to be a part of an urban renewal program. He said that WKU totally utilized the 35 acres provided after houses were torn down.

In erecting many of the buildings, the crews utilized a unique method of construction in the pressure grouting of footings, which allowed the University to construct high rise buildings rapidly and economically.

One of WKU's major feats in construction was the erection of Diddle Arena, which features a self supporting roof structure 300 feet in diameter. "Many people don't know that it is the first of its kind in the country and it is patented," he said.

Other firsts for the University include the installation of the computerized energy management system; the utilization of the Centrex telephone system, which allows every student to have a phone in his/her room; the placement of the majority of the electric and steam facilities underground (which needs \$1 million for updating); and most recently, the installation and purchase of the Dimension computerized telephone system.

During his time at WKU, one of the things that has been most important to Lawson is the revitalization of the older buildings on the campus. "Several people wanted to tear down the old gym (now the Margie Helm Library), but we designed a way to save and convert the old structure," Lawson said. The preservation of buildings has succeeded to the point that 15 to 18 are now listed on the National Register for Historical Buildings.

There are a great many memories in Lawson's career at WKU. One of the most prominent is the WKU victory over UK at Athens, Georgia in 1971.

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February is National Heart Month Improving the Odds: Heart Disease and You

Heart disease is the number one killer in modern industrial society. In the U.S. 54% of all deaths will be due to heart disease or associated causes.

To reduce risks of heart attack, the American Heart Association suggests:

1. Have your blood pressure checked regularly. If it's high, cooperate with your doctor to keep it under control.
2. Don't smoke cigarettes. No cigarette is safe.
3. Eat foods that are low in saturated (animal) fats and cholesterol.

4. Maintain proper weight. If you're overweight, follow Heart Association suggestions to reduce while maintaining a balanced, nutritious diet.

5. Exercise regularly to maintain cardiovascular fitness. Check with your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

6. Have regular medical check-ups, and follow your doctor's advice about reducing your risks of heart attack.

For medical advice, see your doctor. For more information about heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure, ask your local Heart Association.

WKU Wellness New Program: Deskercise!

Americans are some of the most sedentary people in the world. Many of us have jobs that encourage us to sit, sit, sit—and passive sitting works against our staying fit. Optimally, we should all strive to minimize the amount of sitting we do on our jobs. But when we must sit, we can adopt a program of active sitting—that is, "Deskercise."

The new WKU Deskercise program is adopted from a program that was developed for Kentucky state employees. The illustrated booklet of exercises for the 8 week program is available to you from the Department of Personnel Services, 745-5364.

The exercises are designed to help you increase flexibility, improve circulation, tone-up muscles, relieve tension and, in general, feel better. The wonderful thing about these exercises is that they can be done at the same time you accomplish other job duties. Others can be done while you are taking a quick "think break," at lunch, or between tasks.

This is not a weight loss program, but you may discover a positive change in your body configuration by the end of the 8 weeks. If you do lose weight, consider it a bonus. And even if you don't lose weight, your improved muscle tone should make you look slimmer.

Don't feel shy or awkward about doing these exercises around your co-workers. Get right in there and **DO IT!** Get a friend to do them with you. You might just spark the interest and initiative to get others in your office to join in. Get the entire office up and moving! **Make it fun!**

It's never too late for you or someone you know to sign up for the **Deskercise Program** and receive the weekly exercise plans. To sign up or if you have any questions, call Joy Beth Eastin, Wellness Program Coordinator, 745-5364.

See page four for your Deskercise beginning.

Heart Attack: Signs and Symptoms

Ask yourself this important question: Can you tell the difference between indigestion and a heart attack? If your answer is "no," you should learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of heart attack. Your life or that of a loved one may depend on your knowing what to do immediately. When heart attack strikes there is no time for delay. Most heart attack victims can survive if they recognize the early warning signals and get medical care at once.

The signals of heart attack vary.....but the usual warning signs are:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest for more than two minutes.
- Pain may spread to the shoulders, neck or arms.
- Severe pain, dizziness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath may also occur.

These signals are not always present. Sometimes they subside and then return.

Management Skills Workshop "Dealing With Difficult People"

The Western Kentucky University Women's Alliance and the Department of Personnel Services are jointly sponsoring a management skills workshop on campus entitled "Dealing With Difficult People." The program is scheduled for Thursday, March 27, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in DUC Room 305.

Marsha Green, director of human resource development at the University of Kentucky and an experienced training and development consultant, will be the workshop leader. Ms. Green has traveled throughout the United States conducting training programs which focus on management, develop-

ment, and communication. She serves on several professional and advisory boards of directors, both regionally and nationally, and has received many awards, most notably for achievements within the American Society for Training and Development.

The workshop is open to all Western faculty and staff. Workshop fees are \$1.00 for Women's Alliance members and \$2.00 for nonmembers. Fees will be collected at the door. Reservations are encouraged and can be made by calling Anne Murray or Ann Jewell at 2793.



Fingers. With palms down, spread your fingers apart as far as you can. Hold for the count of five. Relax. Repeat.



Knee Kiss. Pull one leg to your chest, grasp with both hands, and hold for a count of five. Repeat with opposite leg.



Middle-Upper Back Stretch. Raise your right arm and grasp it below the elbow with your left hand. Gently pull your right elbow toward your left shoulder as you feel the stretch. Hold for five seconds. Do both sides.

Source: Hope Newsletter, Bob Hope International Research Institute, Seattle, WA.

The following program—developed by Denise Austin, an exercise consultant in Alexandria, Virginia—is endorsed by the American College of Sports Medicine.

Join WKU Deskercise



Quadriceps. Bring your legs straight out in front of your body, and then hold them in that position for five seconds. Make sure you are sitting up straight. Relax. Repeat.



Shoulder Roll. Slowly roll your shoulders forward five times in a circular motion using your full range of motion. Then roll your shoulders backward five times with the same circular motion.



Neck. Let your head drop slowly to the left, then to the right. Slowly drop your chin to your chest, and then raise your chin as high as you can. Turn your head to the left, return it to the normal position, and then turn it to the right.



Side Stretch. Interlace your fingers. Left your arms over your head, keeping your elbows straight. Press your arms backward as far as you can. Then slowly lean to the left and then to the right until you can feel stretching.



Pectoral Stretch. Grasp your hands behind your neck and press your elbows back as far as you can. Return to starting position, then drop your arms and relax. Repeat.



Black Relaxer. Sit on chair. Bend down between your knees as far as you can. Return to upright position, straighten, and relax.



Windmill. Sit in a chair. Place your feet apart on the floor. Bend over and touch your right hand to your left foot with your left arm extended up. Alternate sides repeatedly.

"Up until a few years ago I never missed a WKU game in any sport," he said.

Lawson believes that WKU's future will be extremely bright with President Alexander. "WKU will struggle for a while, but the enrollment will be rejuvenated and things will improve under his leadership," he said.

"Western needs to reestablish itself as a University that contributes to the betterment and quality of life for every Kentuckian," he continued. "Western's mission should be to assist in getting people ready for the world."

As of January 31, 1986, Lawson retired from his position at the University. In the past, Lawson has been offered several consulting opportunities, which he now plans to take advantage of. He is excited about consulting work, but claims that he will always be on hand if the University needs him. If the University receives the \$16 million grant it's seeking for renovations, that time could be sooner than he thinks.

He is proud of the people that he is leaving behind. He said that he is leaving behind a great team of professionals, young and old, who will run the facility so well that some won't even realize that he is gone.

For now, Lawson will be spending some time with his family, which is spread from Phoenix to Denver. Lawson takes pride in the University that he has helped to create. "WKU has always had great concern for people, expanding their horizons and educational opportunities," he said.

The Department of Personnel Services joins with the rest of the University in wishing Owen Lawson a very happy retirement.

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Promotions

Paul Cook—From Asst. to the President for Resources Management & Dir. of the Budget to Executive Vice President for Administrative Affairs, Office of the President

Louise Curry—From Dish Machine Opr. to Senior Cook, Food Services

Jo Ann Mitchell—From Acquisitions Asst. III to Serials Asst. IV, Lib. Auto. & Tech. Svcs.

February Spotlights: 25 Years Ago this month...

Western became the second largest state assisted college in Kentucky as a result of the doubling of its enrollment since 1955. Among all the colleges in the state, Western was third only to UK and U of L. The WKU enrollment was 3,599.

Plans were being made for the construction of E.A. Diddle Arena, a \$2,500,000 building that would hold the crowds that flocked in to see Coach Diddle's teams.

The graduate assistant program was just beginning at WKU with one semester under its belt. WKU was the only state college in Kentucky to have a program like this at the time.

Dr. Lowell Harrison A.B. '46 was head of the history department at West Texas State College.

Dr. Kelly Thompson was honored as Kentucky's outstanding citizen of the year by the Kentucky Press Association.

Russian was added to the curriculum.

15 Years ago this month...

Gone were the days of frisbees and yo-yos; clackers were the latest fad.

Twenty hopefuls sought the Miss Western crown.

Two sociology professors received grants to study the effects of television in Iceland to determine how closely television and crime are related, if at all, and to study the influence of American programming in other countries.

Service Anniversaries

35 Years

Carlyse Barber—Senior Secretary, Public Information (January 1)

20 Years

John Warren Oakes—Associate Professor, Art

15 Years

Brenda Mae Elmore—Building Services Attendant, Physical Plant

10 Years

Ray Hurt—Dairy Worker, Agriculture
Kenneth Kidd—Farm Manager, Agriculture

5 Years

Diane Alpert—Curator, Library Special Collections

New Employees

John Dillard—Superintendent, Office Systems Repair, Purchasing

Michael England—Asst. Prof./News Dir.—WKYU-FM, Media Services

Stella Jewell—Assignments Clerk, Housing

Nancy Kinkade—Typesetter, Purchasing

Michael Williams—Asst. Professor, Modern Lang. & Intercultural Studies

Spring Vacation

Spring Vacation is scheduled for March 10-14. Offices will close at 4:30 p.m. on March 7 and reopen at 8:00 a.m. on March 17. As always, there are essential jobs to be performed during the spring vacation period, and those offices will remain open as required.

Mid-month checks (for faculty) and bi-weekly payroll checks will be issued on Friday, March 7. The semi-monthly checks (for temporary and part-time employees) and student employee checks will be issued on Monday, March 17. End-of-month and semi-monthly checks will be issued on Monday, March 31.

Retirement

Nellie Jessee leaves the University after 12 years of service as a Building Services Attendant in the Physical Plant.

A senior departmental secretary in the history department, Chandra Carter, said, "Being able to take classes is an extra benefit of working at WKU." She said that there has been more than one occasion when a group has asked her for help with their computer system, solely for the experience she has gained in her classes. Having finished her B.A. in criminology, Carter said, "Anybody can find the time to take classes if they want to badly enough. If you don't participate, you're throwing money away."

Part-time employees (faculty and staff employed on at least a one-half time basis) also receive tuition support. For example, a person employed one-half time for one semester would be eligible for 50 percent of the benefit if the course is taken during the semester while the person is a WKU employee. Persons employed less than one-half time, graduate assistants, and student workers are not eligible.



William Gann has made the best of his educational benefits.

Water Treatment Technician Billy Renfro has also made good use of the program. "I wish the University would push the program more," he said. For the last six years he has been working on an associate degree in electrical technology. Renfro, who is taking his last course this semester, said that completing the 75 hours required just took a little extra time, and that it

wasn't hard to do. He advises all faculty and staff members to pursue some classes. "If you don't, you have lost a great opportunity," he said.

If you are interested in learning more about the tuition scholarship program, call Bettie Flener at 745-5346 in the Department of Personnel Services.

DIAGNOSTIC CENTER cont. from page 1

Phyllis Schnacke, clinical services director, said, "Sometimes the school districts don't have personnel within the district that are qualified to do the testing required to diagnose a special needs child."

That's where the sharing comes in. The Center is currently made up of seven professionals who specialize in team work. Making up the team are the director, clinical services director, speech and language pathologist, psychologist/psychometrist, educational assessment coordinator, two half-time family coordinators, a secretary and a student worker. The team is shared with 17 school districts in 13 counties, and finds that it spends a lot of time on the road.

The team begins its work when it receives a referral from a teacher in one of the network's participating school districts. In order to conduct a proper assessment of the child and his capabilities, the team administers tests in everything from vision to level of education, in addition to reviewing medical records, observing the child, and talking with parents or teachers. The lengthy process takes an average of 40 hours per child, and that's only if everything goes perfectly.

Vokurka indicates that things have come a long way in the six years that the Center has been open. He said, "People that couldn't feed themselves or dress themselves can now because they are receiving appropriate training." He attributes this to the fact that the children seen over the past six years have had role models to follow and been taught to learn.

Vokurka, Schnacke, and their staff are on the bandwagon. They are fighting to make the public more aware of children with handicapping conditions and their needs. They try to provide the kinds of assessment that children need to be placed in an appropriate class and for quality programming. The goal is to make the service available to as many children as possible without sacrificing the quality of the testing or the assessments.

The success of the program is evident. Records from the past three years show referrals increasing from 78 to 166, assessments from 71 to 121, consultations from 240 to 550, and referrals from agencies from 64 to 123. All these services are provided at no cost to the 17 participating school districts.

It is important to note that as one of three large diagnostic centers in the state, the WKU Center fills a void. Within the network at the local district level only five of the school districts served have full-time personnel to provide individual assessments. The other twelve systems have only part-time personnel or must contract with non-school personnel, if available, to complete assessments.

Last year, the Center sponsored the Resource Fair, organized to bring greater awareness to organizations that provide services for children and adults in need. Vokurka said that the event, which was coordinated by Dr. Ruth Meredith, featured 44 agencies, who came and set up tables in order to inform the public. This year's fair will be April 22, and Schnacke expects at least 50 agencies.

Housed in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences Building, the Center is special. The staff, which is governed by a board made up of school district representatives, exudes dedication. Each one is willing to work and makes sure that each and every child receives quality attention. In their book, the challenge is never too great nor the mountain too high; it just takes a little longer to get there sometimes.